

FINISHING PLAN

O F

EDUCATION.

L O N D O N :

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FINISHING PLAN
OF
EDUCATION.

NO science being of such moment to mankind, in none is mankind so universally concerned as in education.

The young and the old, the high and the low, the ignorant and the knowing, in every sphere of human life ; instinct, indeed, and reason, are all more or less indispenfably bound to receive, if not to bestow it. Of the inferior animals, so far as we know, no species, no individual pleads exemption from this duty of rear-

ing, or being reared, for the respective offices assigned by the wisdom and goodness of the Parent and Master of all.

He, therefore, who organises and educates even the vegetable tribes, and matures every class of inanimate nature; who, with so astonishing yet intelligible skill, suits the bodies of animals to the souls he intends them; and who has, above all his other animate works in our world, constructed man in his own image, for a temple of that immortal as free spirit with which he informs it; has, by the educative principles and powers impressed on those creatures who could no way else have acquired them, enforced them also on those who could have seen their propriety, though they had not felt it, and though it were not moreover inculcated by express revelation.

While



EDUCATION.

5

While education, with many other social duties, is unerringly practised by the inferior creatures; while we are endowed with like instinct, but with the power of abusing as of improving it; no wonder if by this distinctive power, which enables us to soar above them, we often sink beneath them; if indeed they seem the rational, we the irrational animals, when we rear preposterously, or not at all, the hopes of mankind, and the heirs of heaven; and they educate, with unfailingly-sagacious tenderness, the offspring they know destined like themselves for our service, and dependant on our will. Such contrast gave Gulliver his partiality for the Houyhnhnms, a species who thought perhaps that a later satyrift did honor, where he meant none, to ours, by verifying the fable of the Centaur.

With the animals of instinct, every parent educates, and every parent is qualified. Of creatures rational as well as instinctive, the mother is furnished with the first necessary nourishment; the father is also fraught with native kindness. The lower animals once nursed, and taught to find food, to creep, walk, run, swim or fly, whetted by emulation, sometimes aided by man, complete of themselves the little residue of their education. From man chiefly do they learn their duty to man, which some species, and some individuals of each, are naturally more inclinable than others to perform; though they all respectively teach one another the social offices, whence they never swerve; and doubtless pay spontaneous, separately or jointly, to their Creator, Preserver, and Guide, unremitted adoration.

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To man, however, formed with countenance erect, and even figure divine, a spirit as much higher was imparted: possessing not only all the instinctive powers becoming his species, all the tender affections in a nobler degree; passions to prompt action, and reason to govern them; a sense therefore, intuitive or deductive, of right and wrong; all the qualities proper for the lord of the creatures, the unlimited prerogative of regulating and protecting, rewarding and punishing, of polishing and improving a probationary, thence a precarious and transitory state; in which the soul, according to her improvement and sublimation in the body, might be fitted for the immortality she sought by the light of nature, and which she has found by the light of the gospel.

For rearing a creature composed of such body and such soul, an animal so far more beautiful, strong, docil, sagacious and steady than the brutes, as to be but a little lower than the angels, how much beyond instinct is indispensable!

That the rational mother should fall short of the instinctive, in withholding from her offspring the food sent it from heaven, charity cannot so much as suppose; or that human parents can neglect helpless infancy, instinct has itself sufficiently denied. But, where instinctive care ends, the rational begins; and that liberty, which enables the human parent to suit the nurture or education of the child to the various circumstances of health, temper, capacity, age, climate, rank and destination, endangers also negligence or mistake, in the choice or execution.

Though

Though human parents are at least as capable of the instinctive duties, as parents who can neither mistake nor neglect them; while these can and need carry education no farther, few of those are qualified by convenience or experience, however they may chance to be so by temper, ingenuity, or knowledge, for perhaps the most arduous of human tasks, which, no longer animated or enlightened by instinct, is, alas! so seldom commenced or committed by reason.

In all countries, where prudence or polity has prevailed, and in all ages from the infancy of man, such parents as could not, for whatever cause, educate their children, have devolved that duty upon persons one way or other more qualified than themselves; whether private instructors

tors of approved skill and integrity, or public teachers tried by proper judges, and invested by authority, with the most delicate charge in the republic.

No country was formerly more attentive or more fortunate than our own, in the choice of both private and public instructors. Yet must not any country in every age hope to boast a Chiron or a Socrates, a Plato or an Aristotle, an Aufonius or a Quintilian, a Buchanan or an Ascham, a Fenelon or a Bossuet; any more than such pupils as theirs.

If such masters and such scholars are in all times and places so rare, it is easier to account for their rarity, than to lay down a plan by which they may become frequent, or by which indeed they may again be found at all.

Whoever

Whoever considers the capacity, attention, patience and perseverance; alike necessary to the teacher and to the learner; the knowledge and address indispensable to the one, the obedience and tractability to the other; the ardor equal to give and to receive the light of learning, a gift which Milton would have called the *human* gift *divine*; whoever considers all this, will no longer wonder at the scarcity whether of teachers or of learners; or, when he opposes the obstacles to the qualifications, he will only wonder when either a teacher or a learner is found.

A writing-master, a drawing-master, and, above all, a dancing-master, exhibits, and more or less imparts, with (comparatively) small trouble, given or taken, somewhat pleasing as well as obvious to the eye; and so acquires in all countries
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more or less fortune and fame, according to merit the more real, the more that it is apparent : for every employer may, by mere bodily organs, in a certain, however various, degree, judge of the execution of fingers and of feet. But the cultivation of the invisible as immortal mind, her advancement in science or in virtue, how many are there that see, or that seek; that understand or can promote? *Many talk of Robinhood*, (says a familiar, but pithy proverb) *who never shot in his bow*. Of mind have many spoken (not surely the intellectual Helvetius) who no more defined than discerned her. But of her powers, which he may read that runneth, how few have taken such notice, as to know that they exist? Shall parents be suspected of such attempt or design, who sum the health and happiness of their offspring, like their own, in corporeal grati-

gratification? Shall they therefore choose a tutor but for promoting it? And shall a tutor offer his services, who can pretend any other view? Shall an old-fashioned fellow, who means to support (not to pamper) the flesh for the sake of the spirit, conscious of ones being the mere tabernacle of the other; who has scanned every faculty of the soul, without failing to admire the conformation of the body; who has digested the scheme of rearing the probationary animal, in both parts and in due degree; shall such a fellow dream himself worthy the notice of modern men of taste, or the tuition of a creature who must become such? Shall not any other have a preferable title? especially he, who can with equal justice promise any thing, except what is out of the question, the culture of the mind? And who shall be excluded such title, but the knight-

knight-errant, who proffers that single useless service? Surely no one, because he is a sectary, because he is a jesuit, because he is a nothing, or because he was a something, a butcher, a blacksmith, a valet, a footman, a farmer or a jockey; or because he found a master's degree, as some find a doctor's, in a coach; far less, because he has served his time to the profession, as all writing-masters and dancing-masters do, shall any one be precluded a trade, for which every one, unfit for aught else, is consequentially fitted; only the rearing of a nobleman, gentleman, scholar, or bulwark of the future generation; an honor to earth, and a candidate for heaven! For this easy task we see now no disqualification, but that which in former days was the one thing needful. For success therefore, bating the single exception, all have an equal chance, as
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an equal title; yet peculiarly those who outdo not only reason, but instinct. For instinct, though full as good a fawner, fawns only in one little way, called the kind; but poor confined instinct attempts nothing beyond her: she can neither deceive nor betray.

Some antiquated establishments are yet undemolished, which originally planned the training, and still sometimes actually do train both parts of their precious object. But, supposing their stubborn predilection for such obsolete plan, and their persisting ability as well as resolution to promote it; in spite of parents who love only what they see, and those only who show it them; nay, supposing fashion so capricious as now and then for a while to visit such places of pedantry, their inferiority

feriority to the self-form'd seats of institution, appears at least in this; that, whereas all the pupils of a jockey (except his literal colts) thrive nearly alike, the trammelled, however learned or ingenious, doctor, pretends not to make a scholar, of above one in forty, allowing the hapless thirty and nine to sink into the scorn of incapacity, or the meanness of ignorance—an alternative, which family and fortune do but the more debase; and which might not only have been totally prevented by a properly and perseveringly adapted cultivation; but by this perhaps might all the thirty-nine have been rendered as useful, nay many of them as solidly shining, as the lucky scape-goat, who saving himself gave his master possibly as much pride, as the nine-and-thirty should have given him humiliation.

To

To save, ere too late, some few of the thirty-nine, to give permanence and polish to the fortieth; to minister new improvement (and new it must be) or rather new life to some of the blighted plants of the upstart seminaries; to lend both an opportunity, which neither may have enjoyed, in a multitude promiscuous, promiscuously treated; to supply the benefits without the dangers of school, academy, or college, has this Plan, not unbidden, been adopted.

The terms, at the rate of a hundred guineas a year each pupil, promise not only entertainment with the Principal, a separate room to each student, and every secondary accommodation, except washing; but a regular (thence compendious) cultivation of the English, French, Latin and Greek languages, as severally

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or jointly required ; of such philology as may truly deserve the name of polite learning, by casting that grace over the manners, which, rubbing off every rudeness, impregnates urbanity, and is fairly entitled humanity itself, as alone humanising man. Without this then what is man, since with it he is but himself? Without it, whatever he is, is lost ; and with it, his every power is doubled. From the ancients alone, sacred or profane, and the few moderns who have imbibed their spirit, can this heavenly grace be extracted ; and, duly digested, it will diffuse its benign influence over every sentiment and every expression, every thought and every action, every motion, intellectual or corporeal, that can dignify the nature of man. From so extensively-blessed effects on the individual, and on society, it can hardly be denied an emanation of that
wisdom,

wisdom, which cometh only from above, from the Fountain of grace, and the Father of spirits.

No wonder if such philology be the great object here ; or if history, ancient and modern, be a systematic object of study. Time and place are the spheres of human action. A theory of both, respectively known by the names of chronology and geography, is indispensable to whoever would situate and ascertain those actions or events, which history records in succession, or presents in collateral view.

The young mind must not only be furnished with knowlege ; she must be empowered to digest it ; nor only to arrange with precision, but to judge with propriety ; and, by duly improving

the operation of others, to operate herself.

Philosophy, therefore, passive and active, political and polemic, moral and religious, must, in her every useful branch, be imparted: so maturing head and heart, taste and talent, soul and body together, into the scholar, the gentleman, the peer; the citizen, the patriot, the subject; the member of Christ, the child of God, and the inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

All this is comprehended in the present plan: under the weight of which comprehension the projector might well tremble; did not his experience of the past embolden the future, and the blessing with which Providence has crowned his humble labors, renew his reliance upon it.

Nor

Nor will the terms, which may render the assortment select, yet sufficient, be deemed high by any who consider that the mind opening to the advantages she has hitherto lost, and may soon lose for ever, must embrace them with an ardor proportioned to their now-appearing value, and to the transient opportunity of securing them; and so compass by the fondest exertion of her amplest powers, more in one year, than before, perhaps, in several; nay, bestowing less patrimony on invaluable improvement, than she probably would have bestowed on the gaieties incident to ripening age.

Far, however, is this plan from the exclusion of pleasure; which it means, indeed, merely to promote; by promoting her, *whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace.* But, as that tuition
must

must be deservedly successful, which pretends to mingle no pleasure with profit, one of the indispensable objects of the present plan, is, to blend every delight that can invigorate improvement; and so to temper the passions of a delicate period, towards the purposes for which they were given. The diversions, therefore, of the town, must relieve even the joys of the country; and modern entertainments will not prove the less exquisite, that the taste is formed upon antiquity.

Enough has surely been promised on the pecuniary terms. Separate articles are, therefore, the languages and sciences not before specified; the bodily branches of Philosophy, named Mathematics, theoretic and practical, physical and experimental; the fine arts, particularly, of Music

EDUCATION. 13

Music and Design; nay, where yet wanted, the necessary art of Writing, and science of Arithmetic; as well as the exercises of Dancing, Fencing, and Riding. For, while no needless expence will be countenanced to person or to parts, no attention will be spared that can conduce to the finishing of that masterpiece, the finished man.

Though various finished men, in every quarter of the world, be now their finisher's glory and joy; and, though his many years warfare, under the banner of Education, might apparently entitle him to his discharge, he cannot think of locking up any talents which the Giver of all good may have been pleased to commit, and to continue, doubtless, for exertion; or of quitting a post of honor, if of usefulness, while

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